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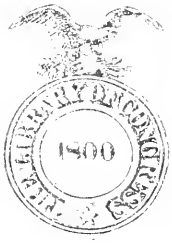
The Soul of Eve

BY

MRS. HELEN ALDRICH DE KROYFT



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THE SOUL OF EVE

MRS. HELEN ALDRICH DE KROYFT

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BY

MRS. HELEN ALDRICH DE KROYFT

AUTHOR OF "MORTARA," "THE FORESHADOWED WAY,"
"A PLACE IN THY MEMORY," ETC.

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Dedication

Part One to this eke of a book was originally very much longer than now; and when in the winter of '71 I gave it at Steinway as a recitation or lecture, up out of the audience came a lovely Miss Dana who, after placing a kiss on my lips, said: "I have been twelve years Paris correspondent for my brother's paper; but in all that time I have never seen or heard anything one-half as beautiful as your creation of Eve in Paradise; and I could not go away without coming to thank you for it."

Hand plaudits had not been wanting, but those few words of praise, in the voice of a cultured stranger, were things for my heart to break smiles upon. And after these many days I make return as best I may by dedicating "The Soul of Eve" to the lovely

Miss Dana

who, passing, paused to enrich my life with a moment of her own—a little legacy for memory to keep.

THE SOUL OF EVE

PART I

WHEN we remember how really grand and beautiful a being man is, it does seem a little like effecting a sort of flank movement upon his greatness even to so much as remind him that science and revelation both have accorded to his father Adam an outside, open land, common earth origin. Moses says: "Formed of the dust of the ground." However significant or however comprehensive the word "dust" may have been in the original of that cyclopean statement, from the time of Ezra, the scribe, down to the nineteenth century, it was understood to mean simply the minute particles of matter that we tread upon. Then science, like a rebuking angel, came to

hold over that little word "dust" the resolving torch of her wisdom, when it was straightway found to cover in its meaning all the indivisible, imperceptible properties, quantities, qualities, instincts, faculties, propensities, crafts, cunnings, intelligences, passions, and aspirations, harvested through the ages to the growing needs of *forming* or developing man from the face of the entire globe.

Although "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," it was not without some touches of inspiration that Moses came to understand the sublime correlation of spirit forces by which the myriad embryo mentalities of the animal world were drawn to, and by dint of development sublimated into that mightiest, subtlest, and most ponderous piece of enginery this side of Heaven, the mind or brain of man; so small as to be covered with a palm, and yet so complex in its machinery, so tremendous

in its force, so incomprehensible in its workings, and so eternal in its results, that only God himself should be forever adequate to its control.

The mightiest of the world's mysteries, and yet, such even, according to the highest wisdom of the age, was Nature's own wondrous endowment of him who six thousand years ago stood forth upon the unfinished scenes of the earth as the grand epitome or lofty embodiment of all that law-governed material could produce, namely: an upright human intelligence, possessed of body and of mind, possessed of passion and of intellect, but as void of all the heart or soul-endowing qualities of love as were the millions of contemporaries around him; among whom must have been the sons of "Nod," to whose land the outcast Cain fled, and whose daughters he of the branded brow subsequently honored with marriage; the peoples for whom Cain built

a city and named it to his son; the peoples for whom Abel kept his herds and tended his flocks; the peoples named in *The Pre-Adamite:* "sons of Ish—(men of low degree)."

As soulless as were all these, we say; when as by a backward turn of the horoscope divine, it was given the inspired Moses to behold the first earth-man who had climbed so far up the spiral staircase of being as to reach the, so to speak, affinitizing fitness for that union of soul with mind for which the transcribers of Moses hundreds of years later could find no better expression than "a breath" of the Supreme "breathed into the nostrils of man."

Too divine to contact matter, a soul identity from out the realm of souls could only blend with the mental spirit of mortal, which harmonious fusion of being was to the natural man, or to the frosted cells of his natural being, precisely what the awakening spring-time is

to the world: a serene unlocking of all his senses to the light and heat of love; whereby his cold methodic reason warmed to the wisdom of understanding, his bare belief rose to far-seeing faith, his dull expectancy put on white-winged hope, while all the pulses and passions of his natural, unawakened, unenlivened, unregenerate heart purpled to the graces and qualities of goodness—goodness that, consecrating his thoughts, warming in his words, shining in his deeds, and melting into beautiful benignities in his smile, changed him literally from a subtle mental spirit to a *living* or *acting soul*, drawing life and light from the Divine, and treading the world amenable alike to the Celestial as to the Terrestrial, with only a step between.

L. of C.

PART II

And God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden, garden of the Lord, or Paradise of God, to dress it and to keep it.

But how God *took* the man or how he *put* him to within the boundary of the *unseen*, we are not told; and doubtless Adam himself never could say exactly how or why it was that he went treading the shining avenues that opened up before him, even to the gates of Paradise; himself gravitating, as it were, from the material to the *immaterial*, from the mortal to the *immortal*, as in abeyance to the heaven-tending laws of soul gravitation.

But however *taken*, or however borne across those shining portals, it were none the less by edict divine, albeit thither led simply by the force of that charmèd attraction which forever draws one twin soul to its other dearer self,

though separated wide as heaven, and high as the stars that shine above it. High privilege though, that of primal innocence, thus to part the veils that shut away the beautiful birthland of the soul, and without dread or pain of death go to breathe the expansive airs and revel amid the white scenes and ecstatic joys of spirit being, the while moving amid seraphic throngs, fanned by breezes wafted from afar, balmy with perfumes and exhilarant with love.

But although a paradisiacal or spirit world, Eden was to Adam still a real world with grounds beneath his feet, full enough suggestive of tilling. Fields, too, real as erst his eyes had looked on, were everywhere rising to his view, clad in verdure perennial and bordered by majestic rivers, gemmed with bubbling fountains and knotted over with bowers of celestial amaranth, whence sweet elysiums invited him forth, intersected by flowery lanes, ambrosia bordered, and

overhung with vines, purple clustered, but all wayward enough to profit by his *dressing*. Trees, too, everywhere towered above and around him, heavily pendant with luscious fruits; and when the sun had risen high enough above the heaven-lighted hill-tops to awaken appetite, albeit in Eden, Adam, as fate would have it, bent his steps toward the centremost tree of the garden; when lo! one met him there with face like unto an flaming fire, bold of speech and mighty, crying:

Know, O! Adam, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou wilt surely die," disappear or go hence. Then, as by some inner sense, new lighted, Adam saw and understood that although an inhabitant of the blissful Eden, and the while restrained by all its holy influences, *he* was nevertheless of the earth *earthy*, and *yet* far too near the animal plane to eat of a tree from whose subtle juices archangels even had quaffed and grown

dazed with dreams of ambitious rule. Furthermore, Adam saw and understood that while the natural mental spirit in him had been clothed upon by all the heart or soul-endowing qualities of love, volition in him was still left untrammelled, as, less than that, he were less than man; and therefore *will* in him would be forever the mighty umpire to his three-fold being, at whose high behest he could slay his body, strangle or choke away remorse from his soul, silence its faintest whisper, and at will, impoverish his mind, or at will gormand it with that kind of knowledge that puffeth up the senses to an irreverent, demoniac lust for greatness—greatness that dreameth of power defiant to God even; and thus, dying to love, fall from love's Paradise. Then, satisfied and grateful to have escaped so dire a calamity, Adam went otherwhere and gathered for his noonday repast.

But sitting by the door of his celestial bower, alone and kingly, Adam could not stay the soul in him from taking on reflections not altogether conducive to happiness :

" Even the birds of the air have their mates "—quoth he to himself—" and all the animals when I named them, I did observe me, came marching past in twain. And thus voice answereth to voice, and all nature hath harmony with itself, while this soul in me crieth and there is none to answer. I stretch out mine arms, and lo! from out the two worlds I have lived in I may fold nothing to my breast, all, all mine own. Even these spirits and angels, as they come and go, bent on errands swift twixt earth and heaven, do greet me with shows of fraternity, and then flee mine embrace like the shadows of air. They have not flesh and bones as I have, and would to God I were something less or something more ! "

PART III

Not good that man should be alone.

If the words: "In the image and after the likeness of God," admit of one construction more palpable to finite comprehension than another, it is that souls are twained or twinned born "in the image and after the likeness of God;" and since Adam became only *a* soul or *one* soul, it follows that the soul of Eve was an inhabitant of the Paradise of Eden at the time of Adam's entrance into it. Indeed, the very name assigned to her, *Eve*, *life*, *spirit* or *soul*, is of itself enough to establish the fact of her prior existence.

Then, considering the high spiritual state to which Adam had been lifted, and knowing, moreover, as we do, that in the soul life thought nears the object

of thought, and they are ever nearest us or most with us of whom we most think, nothing becomes more rational than to suppose that often, often, bending over the mossy rims to the nectar fountains everywhere bubbling around him, Adam saw, anon, reflected in the placid waters before him, the image of a face beside his, as of one long since loved and lost, so familiar each lineament and so welcome seemed to him the sweet presence withal. But, when lifting his eager, love-lighted eyes for the original, the physical in him grown dominant again, *naturally* the vision seemed to him flown and he left alone as before; when, being only a man after all, methinks I hear him exclaiming, half under his breath:

"Ha! an angel was with me here but now, like unto mine own soul's *other dearer self;* but alas! mine o'erheated gaze hath robbed me of what mine eyes would give the world to look on again!"

And then straightway down the flowery aisles rushed he, making quick survey of each angel form as she passed, something as one stems an hurrying crowd, eager of coming soon upon one face familiar whereon to break the smiles of recognition; until finding search fruitless and calmer grown, Adam, maylike, retraced his steps slowly to the fountain, or, reluctant, turned him aside wending his way thoughtfully to his tasks again.

And how long Adam may have thus sojourned in the Garden or Paradise of Eden, vexed with like apparitions of the longed-for mate to his soul; sleeping and dreaming of her, and awaking but to dream of her still, meeting her smile now in the mirroring waters, as if forever twained to his side, even as companioned to him ever in the dial of his thoughts; or, in still more fortuitous mood, brightening for a moment full to his view and then melting shadowily

afar, the same angelic presence seeming to him thus ever either frightened away by his fierceness, or purposely eluding his grasp—how long, we say, Adam may have thus sojourned in the Paradise of Eden brightening and refining to the will and for the purposes of God, no one can know; for

"A day with God is as an thousand years, and an thousand years as one day." Long enough though, we know, for the entire animal world to be *brought* from the outer plains of Eden and made to pass there slowly in his spiritualized review and be named, the while, by names fitting from his lips. Long enough, too, for keeping and dressing the garden with its shining river meandering scores of leagues away. Long enough, too, for the great Heart of Heaven to be finally moved with pity for his sighs of loneliness; when lifting up His voice, God proclaimed, not only to the mighty who stood

in His presence, but sent it echoing down through all the listening ages:

Behold: "It is not good that man should be *alone*."

Then was there silence in the heavens and silence on the earth, while the shades of night crept softly upon the weary world, and over the reposing form of earth's forthcoming lord passed the all-magnetizing hand of God; moving him to a sleep so deep and so profound, that his side, even, might be sundered, and the place healed again ere he should awaken.

PART IV

The Soul of Eve.

WILL, with God, is mandate uttered; and now all creation felt the signs of its approaching completion. From the highest heaven to the remotest limit of space the very airs throbbed with its mighty meaning; and as at the lofty endowment of man everything in earth and air was drawn upon for its highest instinct of embryo mentality, so now all the elementary existences of the Edenic or Paradisiacal world felt themselves drawn upon for the more heavenly endowment of woman, last crowning work of the great Creator, the rich casket of whose being had been purposely set in the Paradise of Eden that all the occult graces of Paradisiacal existence might flow thereto; and thus, through her, not only put her offspring

forever linked hands with the angels, but pave the way for the coming of Him who should, ere long, open up to the world life and immortality beyond the grave.

What is to be, angels, like mortals, have a tendency to ; and so now, from up out all the seraphic throng, as if seeking or waiting on her destiny, moved the angel soul of Eve, all beautiful and non-incarnate, and stood in the presence of her Creator, God, close wrapped in the white of spirit radiance that answereth at will to wings, and at will to mantles of light ; while native in her pure mind, reason sat enthroned, memory unrolled her thought-kaleiding panoramas, ambition lighted her quenchless fires, and from the heaven-piercing pinnacles of thought, imagination plumed her love-lighted wings. Besides, as the emotions of one mind may ever, at will, be infused into the mind of another, or as the beautiful departing

always bear away from us, as a part of themselves, whatsoever of good they have won from our love, so now the angel soul of Eve, swift gravitating to the state we name mortal, drew to herself, or to the charmèd repository of her sentient being, not only all that was to her inherent of Paradise, but also all that was kindred in heaven.

And first to lead the long celestial train, the sum of whose endowing graces were to make up the sum of woman's being—first of all came Tenderness and as primal to her nature, laid down the rich opals of Feeling that should forever blush in the soul of woman as though all her thoughts had taken on the tints of the roses at morn. Then next came sweet Forbearance, and cast thereto the grace of her spirit that suffereth long and is kind.

Then next, Patience that outwatcheth the stars; and Hope that hopeth

still when the day is over and all is lost. Then the angel most beautiful in heaven, Compassion, drawing near and stooping as if to heal, added that Christliest of all the womanly graces, Pity, which hath in't the trick of heart that moveth to tears ere sorrow is; while, close upon her steps followed one, without the light of whose presence heaven itself were dark, the angel of Love—Love that believeth the impossible, braveth all things, and is mighty to endure; Love that teacheth to forgive, helps to forget and whitens the memory of all things; Love that, lacking all, hath yet itself wherewith to bless; and, smiling laid down for the chiefest adornment of woman that pearl of greatest price, Love-unselfish, that maketh beautiful whatsoe'er it shines on.

Then approached one more majestic than the rest, and slower of step and haughtier of mien, and proudly made

offering of Endurance, that mightiest of the virtues; while, close upon her train, as nearest of kin, followed the sorrowing-most angel of the soul, Wounded-love, and quick eclipsed every other gift with that jewel which most likeneth to heaven, Forgiveness, all pearly with tears that, trembling on the slighted cheek of woman, should seem ever waiting but the look of penitence to melt them into smiles.

Then, last of all, came Beauty, of gentle mien and softly tread ; and with hand no whit grudging, quick spread over all the charms of her queenly grace, adding thereto sweet amenities of voice that the angels, even, might pause a little on their harps to listen for; the while, braiding from the magic of her smile a sceptre that should win for woman kingdoms, lift her to thrones and place crowns at her feet. Then, parting her ruby lips, whose honeyed accents "the sons of God,"

even, should one day come down to wait on, Beauty whispered to the yet non-incarnate soul of woman:

"My tears give I unto thee also, that though all the world should forsake, and heaven itself seem too far away to pity or to save, Beauty's tears shall fail thee not; but, pearling down thy silken lashes, melt away the potency of kings, raise sieges, disperse belligerent hosts, level walls and unbar to thee prison doors that well-nigh shut away the impossible!"

Thus, at the ornate endowment of woman's prescient being, in lieu of myriad animal instinct, gates to fields felicitous were unbarred; and down through all the pulsing avenues of thought and feeling flowed the sweet protoplasts of spirit-being that, borne by angel hands, shone like unto bridal gifts ordained to the rich dower of her whom, naming, they named Love-angel of the Garden, twinned soul to the soul

in Adam, by whose starry magnetism alone he had been drawn up out of the world into the Paradise of Eden, thus symbolizing forever woman's first mission to man: his elevation through her love.

Thus, we say, upon the snowy tablets of woman's prescient being, Paradisiacal protoplasts were cast; until it would seem that heaven itself had been well-nigh robbed poor for the richer endowment of her, in the coronated bliss of whose nature, but "a little lower than the angels," was thus fashioned a temple possible for the Divine Himself to dwell in, as in her flesh the very God of gods should one day be made manifest, and close wrapped in the chaste endurance of its might, the Prince of Peace go forth to chain His demoniac foes, conquer death and ransom the world. Then, whitening and immortalizing it with His own exceeding glory, go to reign in it in heaven, and at last come

to reign in it on earth, with every knee bent to His worship, every tongue confessing His goodness, and every heart attuned to His praise.

PART V

Though angel still.

DESTINY keeps no dial, but is a time unto herself, and now from the great watch-tower of fate was echoed through all the vaults of space the hour for the earth-crowning, creation-finishing work of God; when straightway the windows to heaven were opened, and over all its glittering battlements leant myriad hosts, with all eyes as the eye of one face intent upon Him whom, aforetime, they saw bend His divine head to breathe into the nostrils of man "the breath of life." And just so now, they saw Him stooping again, but this time to lift the physical up to its kindred spiritual; and softly, tenderly, from the side of sleeping Adam drew He one snowy rib, a little from the all that was His own; and while yet warm and quivering with sensation and all aglow

with affinitizing, magnetic life, He hastened and fast belted down with it the wings to the soul of Eve; while quick over all her fair proportions spread from it a thin veil of mortality, so thin indeed, that the Divine should still forever shine from out her, love's one beacon light in the world, and forever and forever "the glory of man!"

Thus the beautiful, smooth, white-faced, Edenic, Adamite, Caucasian, soul-endowed woman first came into being; when, mantled in the golden radiance of her own silken tresses, that trailing, seemed to kiss the dews from the leaves and the flowers, leaning upon the unseen Arm of her Creator and escorted by bands of angels, she moved softly down the flowery aisles of Eden, while the lilies, pale nuns of the flowers, drooped their heads as she passed, never to lift them again in the presence of so much loveliness; the queens of the roses blushed scarlet, and the violets

purpled beneath the pressure of her tender feet; and lo! doth Adam sleep? What! sleep, when seraphic choirs wait to touch chords yet unheard in heaven, and Gabriel himself is moved to turn his face, albeit for one brief glance, half to admire and half to envy? Sleep! when the great God of gods, even, is stayed from entering Him upon the eternal Sabbath of His rest, and over all the thought wires of the Universe is flashing the news of creation finished? Sleep! when the beautiful impersonation of all that his lonely heart had longed for, ached for, and wept for, but never dared to hope for, draweth so near as to mingle her shadow with the visions of his dreams!

Ah! no. Were his heart the lost Pleiade, such presence had brought it back; and look! he hath arisen, and hasteneth to make him obeisance as becometh him alway. Words, though, and sentences fit-framed for salutation

he hath not. Strange fatality, that when the heart feels most it should ever speak so little! His feet, too, seemed riveted to the spot; and then, anon, he advanced, and, anon, drew back, whispering to himself:

"Maylike wings do still lurk beneath those fair shoulders, and I be mocked with a vision again as erst I was."

Then suspense grew terrible, past endurance; and risking all in one mad rush, Adam, for one brief second, clasped the lovely form before him in his arms. Then, half affrighted at his audacity, but more than satisfied, the first of husbands and the first of fathers stood apart; and spreading wide those great protecting arms of his, so mighty to shield, so tender to caress, and whose shelter a weary angel, even, might covet, the while with the new great love burning in his heart and melting into rainbow smiles through his tears, Adam lifted up his voice and gave loud

utterance to that first strain of gratitude that ever rose to the ear of God from human lips:

Lo! "this is *now* bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh;" which was as if he had said to his listener fair:

Though angel still, yet mortal art thou *now* like unto myself!

Such transformation wondrous and such miracle sublime needed none other heralding in Eden; and scarcely had these words fallen from the lips of the enraptured Adam, ere the tongues, as of an mighty concourse, took them up in glad hallelujahs, until it seemed that the very winds did repeat them, seraphic choirs chanted them, orchestral bands hymned them, and on harps too golden for aught but seraphic touch cherubs wove them into swelling harmonies. Angels sang them as the glad omega and beautiful crowning to all God's works. The stars also sang together, the sweet Pleiades lifting their

lofty soprano to the highest heaven; while Jupiter rolled in his mighty bass, and down through all the vaulted skies of space Arcturus thundered his trumpet accompaniment to great creation's hymn of jubilant praise and thanksgiving to great creation's God.

Little, though, to Him, whose throne is set in *the heavens*, and whose dominion is from everlasting to everlasting—little to Him were the trumpetings of stars, the chanting of spheres, or the jubilant chorus of angels compared to the joy He had in the twainéd pair who stood in His presence; the one, mighty and majestic in His image, as the other lofty and beautiful in His likeness, the twain twainéd one in flesh as erst they had together twainéd hung upon the tree of life; thence twinned born in soul, as now dual hearted and love-bound to all eternity, even as the *image* and the *likeness* of God are twainéd one in Heaven.

All communications to the author, orders for her books, etc., may be addressed: Mrs. Helen A. De Kroyft, Aldrich Place, Dansville, N. Y.

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